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ABSTRACT

This document reports on the Bilingual Education Program established under Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended in 1967. The Bilingual Education Act is specifically designed for those children who come from environments where the dominant language is not English. A significant requirement of the Bilingual Office of the Office of Education is the inclusion of a section for accountability for results in every bilingual project. It was decided to select discretionary programs such as Title VII and implement and develop evaluative procedure. Major requirements for accountability include the following: (1) Objectives must be stated in terms of desired student performance; (2) A school system must recognize its own capabilities and deficiencies and must seek to utilize appropriate technical assistance in an effort to develop and operate an effective program; and (3) All projects must provide for an independent educational accomplishment audit of the project. Program evaluation is done on a project by project basis. Individual project data emerging from first and second year projects show that concrete results are already being achieved. Of great significance is the fact that programs have reduced the number of student absences. (CK)

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BILINGUAL EDUCATION

I. Introduction

The Bilingual Education Program was established under Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, (Public Law 89-10), as amended in 1967, (Public Law 90-247). Funding began in 1969 with 7.5 million for 76 projects and funding has expanded to 25 million in 1971. This money has financed a total of 169 projects which are geographically dispersed through out the country. There are currently nineteen different language populations involved, including speakers of twelve American Indian languages, an Eskimo language and Chamorro, the language of Guam, as well as Spanish, French, Portuguese, Chinese, and Russian.

The Bilingual Education Act is specifically designed for those children who come from environments where the dominant language is not English. Research has indicated that when these children are taught the necessary concepts in their native language, as well as in English, they will achieve academic success and at the same time acquire an adult literate control of both languages. Similarly, English speaking children who participate in bilingual programs will also be able to function comfortably in both languages and in both cultures if taught in both languages.

The models in operation establish integrated classrooms where children, whose dominant language is other than English and who come from a different culture, are brought together with English speaking children, for the purpose of learning and sharing cultural experiences. Both languages must

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be used as the medium of instruction. Within these parameters a variety of models are envolving, each being modified to suit the ethnic distribution, local educational system, and its philosophy of education.

As mentioned before, there is evidence that bilingual education is successful. Successful strategies for teaching bilingual children have been developed in experimental programs, developed both abroad and in this country, and have furnished a base from which to start the program. Emphasis is placed on adapting and refining these program strategies to fit the different age and language groups. In addition these strategies need to be expanded so that a total curriculum from early childhood through adult education is available. Some of the early efforts in bilingual instruction were located in: Switzerland and Candada and in the United States in Las Cruces, New Mexico, Carlsband, New Mexico; and Dade County, Florida.

We know that techniques now being used, even when applied minimally, are an aid to learning. One common example of this, is allowing the bilingual child to speak and learn in his dominant language when he comes to school. Formerly, it was believed even by well-intentioned school administrators that the use of a language other than English by a child would deter his learning, therefore, such a practice was prohibited in the school. Now in many communities where the dominant language is not English, schools employ aides to communicate with the child in his own language.

II. Accountability

A significant requirement not of the Act, but of the Bilingual Office is the inclusion of a section on Accountability for Results. With the acute limitation of available funds, officials in the U. S. Office of

Education felt that increasing care had to be excerised to assure the best return on expenditures. Noting that much educational research in the past has resulted in either unmeasured or insignificant results, it was decided to select discritionary programs such as Title VII and to implement and develop evaluative procedure. This procedure is described in the Manual in the following terms:

"Every local educational agency accepting a grant under Title VII will be held responsible for the achievement of specific objectives using certain procedures during a specified period of time, and for the cost effectiveness of the instructional and management procedures involved in the project. Major requirements for accountability include the following:

"1. Objectives must be stated in terms of desired student performance. Obviously, a school system cannot determine the extent to which its objectives have been achieved unless its goals, embodied in the objectives, are clearly defined and measurable..

"2. A school system must recognize its own capabilities and deficiencies and must seek to utilize appropriate technical assistance in an effort to develop and operate an effective program.

"3. All projects must provide for an independent educational accomplishment audit of the project, to appraise school officials of the validity of their own evaluative processes and data."

Project BEST in New York City has made a study of Title VII bilingual Programs and has classified them according to the objectives which project personnel hope to reach. Projects with the same objectives, same age groups,

and the same language are being classified according to patterns used for achieving the objectives. Prototypes will then be chosen and comparisons will be made among projects to identify the most successful models.

III. Status of Program Evaluation

Program evaluation (appropriate for what has been a developmental program) is done on a project by project basis. The accountability for results concept has been instituted in all funded projects to date. Implicit in the accountability concept has been the need for assuring that (1) a program has the potential for being locally replicated and exported for replication elsewhere; and (2) than an on-going evaluation for the purpose of program development and refinement be a strategy of the project.

Comparative evaluative data for all projects are not available. However, substantial data exist and plans are being formulated to retrieve and analyze these data through contracted services.

Individual project data emerging now from first and second year projects show that concrete results are already being achieved. Projects frequently report an improvement in reading both in English and in Spanish. For example, in one program the third graders in the bilingual program gained 51 percentile points in reading in English as compared with a gain of 36 percentile points for third graders outside the program. The children in the bilingual program completed their 25 points above the comparison group and in the top 20 percent. In addition, the bilingual children progressed to the top quartile in Spanish, thus demonstrating the reciprocal effect of learning in both languages. In another program, children who were monolingual speakers of another language on entrance to the program were judged to be conversationally bilingual by midyear. Tests on cognitive skills

and general ability showed, in most cases, gains made by children in the bilingual programs. Children in the kindergarten Portuguese bilingual program in Artesia, California, scored at the 80 percentile the Metropolitan Reading tests at the end of the kindergarten program, exceeding the national norm by 30%. The experimental first graders in the same program reached a grade level of 2.2 on the Cooperative Primary Test as compared with the average for the district of 1.8 and the national average 1.9. Navajo Indian children who were in the kindergarten bilingual program showed greater gains than the comparison group in every area of the Metropolitan Readiness Test except one. Children in the first grade program made greater gains in all cases than the Indian children in the comparison group. Of great significance for the success of the program is the fact programs have reduced the number of absences of students. As an example, a dramatic reduction was reported by Redwood City, California. This program measured a 70% reduction in the number of absences during the year as comparison groups measured only 60% reduction.

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